

Teams Strong In Basketball

Press-Herald SPORTS

A-8

Friday, December 6, 1968

Happy Days For Batters

Baseball will belong to the batter and the fans will probably have more to shout about next season.

Two important rule changes affecting the pitchers were announced at the winter baseball meeting in San Francisco by Commissioner William D. Eckert.

The height of the pitching mound has been lowered five inches to within four inches of Little League. The strike zone was shrunk to conform with Little League umpiring again.

The rule was also changed so relief pitchers will be charged with more earned runs.

"I asked the rules committee for changes that would put more action in the game," said commissioner Eckert. "I think they've done it, and they have put more excitement for the fans into baseball."

The way the rules men figure it, pitchers were so good last year because they were able to stand way up there on those 15-inch-high mounds, "throw down from those cliffs," and let fire with everything they had at a nice, juicy strike zone.

All mounds will be lowered to 10 inches, and the slope leading up to them will be made "gradual and uniform" so pitchers cannot come thundering downhill.

And the strike zone, which used to extend from the top of the batter's shoulders to a level vaguely described as "the knees," will now extend only from the batter's armpits to the top of his knees. What's more, some pretty broad hints were tossed out that the umpires were a bit too generous in giving pitchers credit for strikes that may have been wide of the plate.

What it all adds up to is that a pitcher is going to have to be more careful with his tosses — and that may take something off the pitch to get greater accuracy.

But two good authorities aren't so sure that the rules makers accomplished what they set out to do — put more base hits into the game.

Both Harry (The Hat) Walker, Houston Astros' manager who is acknowledged one of the game's experts on hitting, and Cal Hubbard, supervisor for the American League, think the width of the strike zone — not the height — has been the cause of so many strikeouts.

"I don't want to accuse the umpires, because they're doing a good job," said Walker. "But there's been plenty of 'outside' strikes called. The result is that strikeouts are up by about 300 per club per season over what they used to be."

Hubbard put it this way: "The complaints mostly have been about the width of the strike zone. So what did they change? The height."

The scoring change that will miff pitchers had to do with earned runs off relief hurlers.

Until now a reliever entering the game at a time when there would have been three out in an inning except for an error was not charged with any runs — even if he gave up 10 before the final out. Now he'll get charged with whatever he gives up.

Example: a pitcher comes in with two out and one man on base as a result of an error. The first man he faces, hits a homer; under the new rule he's charged with one earned run.

LaRusso Likes Don Rickles

Besides scoring points, grabbing rebounds and playing rugged defense, Rudy LaRusso has developed into his team's number one comedian with the help of Don Rickles.

"He has every Don Rickles record ever made and he sits and listens for hours when ever he has the time," wife Roslyn LaRusso reports.

"When Don Rickles is on television, Rudy will be rolling on the floor in laughter and won't be able to talk until an hour later."

In the team's dressing room, Rudy will take the role of Rickles and use every joke he has stored away on his teammates.

As one player reported, "If you're having a bad night you almost don't want to go back to the dressing room because you know Rudy has just heard a new album and he can't wait to use the material."

O'Malley Plans Retirement

Los Angeles Dodger President Walter O'Malley, 65, said Wednesday he intends to retire after one more season. His successor will be his son, Peter O'Malley who has moved up through chain of command in recent years.

Walter O'Malley said in San Francisco at the winter baseball convention he will stay in Los Angeles and serve as chairman of the board.

O'Malley bought into the club in 1944 and became president in 1950.



PAUL JONES

Sprints Go at Ascot

Fifty drivers will take part in Sunday afternoon's sprint car finale at Gardena's Ascot Park. Race time is 2 p.m.

Three contenders are Bob Hogle, Dick Fries and Paul Jones.

Hogle seeks his 12th feature win of the year. He has dominated racing on the half-mile clay oval this season, winning 11 CRA features, one USAC sprint car main event, and the 100-mile Pacific Coast Championship super-modified and caged sprint car feature at the track two weeks ago.

Hogle will again wheel his famous Offenhauser powered "Tamale Wagon" from Anaheim.

Fries will be after his third CRA feature win of the year, after taking the 100-lap Labor Day sweepstakes. He drives a Chevy V8 powered car entered by Dean Meltzer and Jim Vultbert of San Diego.

Jones will go for his third CRA win of the year. He won the 50-lap CRA Grand Prix at Ascot in September. He also wheels a Chevy V8.

Rowing Regatta Planned

The nation's amateur rowing season will get a splashy opening Dec. 14 at the Long Beach Marine Stadium.

Officials of the Long Beach Rowing Assn. announced their sponsorship of the first annual Long Beach Christmas Sprint Regatta.

Oarsmen from Cal State College Long Beach and several other colleges and universities will take part in the event.

Elvin Hayes Top Scorer

San Diego's super-rookie Elvin Hayes with two of the top individual scoring performances of the week, 36 and 34 points, both against Detroit, has increased his National Basketball Association scoring margin over runner-up Bob Rule of Seattle to 83 points.

Hayes' 718 points and a 31.2 per game average were scored in 23 games, four less than Rule, who in 27 outings had 635 with a 23.5 per game average.

In third place is Elgin Baylor of Los Angeles with 626 points, followed by Earl Monroe of Baltimore with 622 and Dave Bing of Detroit with 603.

Two of the four teams in the semi-finals of the Pacific Shores Tournament are from Torrance.

Two-time winner North will play top-seeded Morningside tonight and South will clash with Beverly Hills tonight in games at Aviation High.

South eliminated host Aviation, 82-69, last night while North downed Redondo, 84-68.

Bishop Montgomery, third place team a year ago, was beaten for the second straight night by Torrance High, 71-67.

West, after winning on Wednesday, was beaten by Morningside, 74-29.

Although South had its game pretty well wrapped up in the final minute of play, a double technical foul was called against Aviation for protesting a tripping penalty.

Mike Cloyd led the scoring for South with 21 points, followed by Dennis Rector with 19 and Jack Peterson with 18.

In the first round of the playoffs Wednesday South High handed Torrance an 86-68 loss at Aviation's gym. On the same court West spurred in the second half to a 63-58 win over Loyola and Aviation handcuffed Bishop Montgomery, 74-55.

In a doubleheader at Redondo, the host Seahawks dumped El Segundo, 64-45, while North turned on Culver City, 65-60.

In a three-setter at Mira Costa High the opening scores were: Mira Costa, 72, Leuzinger 70; Morningside 76, Santa Monica 60; Beverly Hills 89, Serra 62.

Among those who scored 20 or more points were Mike Cloyd of South with 25, Jack Peterson of South and Dan Anderson of North with 24, Bob Kolodziejczak (23) and Tom Sandowich (22) of West, and Greg Collins of Bishop Montgomery with 20.

South, 86-68

South — 13 28 23 20-56
Torrance scoring: Peterson (24), Rector (18), Cloyd (25), Barron (7), Miller (11), Simon (7), Vartanian (4).
Torrance scoring: Souza (6), Jasper (18), Baker (18), Fox (12), Fernley (1), Sherbo (2), Moon (1).

West, 63-58

West — 10 11 21 21-63
Loyola scoring: Kolodziejczak (23), Moberly (4), Sandowich (22), Thomas (1), Smalley (7), Neal (6).
Loyola scoring: Scherbar (23), O'Mara (18), Good (5), Heiserman (12).

North 65-60

North — 15 12 13 25-65
Culver City scoring: Anderson (24), Fraasquillo (5), Jones (3), Peet (5), Thomas (13), Brady (13), Kramer (2).
Culver City scoring: Arnold (26), Koller (11), Gruendyke (6), Gregory (6), Jensen (9).

Aviation, 74-55

Aviation — 8 15 14 18-55
Montgomery scoring: Constantino (7), Reams (2), Moreau (7), Collins (20), Connors (10), Rost (7).
Aviation scoring: Barr (27), Raybon (6), Coker (12), Bunch (11), Montague (10), Fraser (2), Holly (2), Johnson (2).

State Meet Won by L.A. Valley

The El Camino cross country team finished fifth in the state junior college meet at Southwestern College in Chula Vista Saturday.

Valley College of the Metropolitan Conference scored a winning 50 points in the meet.

Valley, Bakersfield (third with 74), Pasadena (fourth with 91), and El Camino (fifth with 119) gave the Metro Conference four of five Southern California qualifiers for the 10-team meet. Mt. San Antonio of the Pacific Southwest Conference was second in the race with 73 points.

Mark Covert of Valley covered the 4-mile course in 29:32. He was 17 seconds ahead of Santa Monica's Richard Carr who was clocked in 20:49.

El Camino's Tony Baker was eighth with a time of 21:12. He was 10th in a recent conference meet.

Dates Set For Show In Anaheim

Exhibits, displays and booths of interest to any family, ranging from tots to grandfathers, will mark H. Werner Buck's Southern Calif. Sports, Vacation and Recreational Vehicle Show Jan. 24 through Feb. 2 at Anaheim Convention Center.

This \$15 million panorama of outdoor equipment and vehicles will cover the 300,000 square feet of the huge Anaheim facility, and will represent two annual shows combined.



ROLLOUT... Quarterback Dan Heck (16) of El Camino broke loose for an 8-yard gain before being pushed out of bounds by Diablo Valley's Dave Maggi (64). El Camino beat the Vikings, 37-12, in the first round of the

junior college playoffs last Saturday and will meet Fresno in the semi-finals tomorrow afternoon. (Rick Burow photo).



SECOND GENERATION... Offensive end Rick DeArmitt of El Camino is the son of Dick DeArmitt who played at the college in 1947. The current team is involved in the state junior college playoffs and will perform at Fresno tomorrow.

Semis Set For Fresno

Both teams will be at their battle stations and primed for action as the Fresno City College Rams engage the El Camino Warriors in a Pearl Harbor Day clash at Ratcliffe Stadium Saturday. Kickoff time is 1 p.m. for the state junior college semi-final game

pitting the powerful, undefeated, No. 1-ranked Warriors against the reigning Valley Conference champions. The winner of the junior college titanic will move into the state finals next week, the losers will hang up their cleats for the season.

Great balance is the forte of both teams. El Camino is primarily a running team, but has a fine passer in freshman Dan Heck and outstanding receivers in John Featherstone, Tom Reynolds and Dave Boyd. Fresno will counter aerially with QB Mike Rasmussen and receivers Steve Natsues, Chuck Davidian, Don Burdick and Vic Lamanuzzi.

The Warriors running game is led by Boyd, a 6'2" 200-pounder, who ripped 992 net yards on 217 carries during the regular season. Boyd, whose great power and speed on the sweep, behind great offensive blocking, makes him a threat to score on every play, is the Warrior scoring leader with 13 TD's and 2 PAT's for 82 points. Not far behind is All-American fullback Tom Reynolds, who missed two regular season games. Reynolds is also the team's leading receiver with 34 grabs for 691 yards and 5 TD's. Rounding out the fantastic E.C. backfield is halfback Ed Gilles, a fine rusher and blocker.

Fresno's rushing game is led by Lamanuzzi, a gummy 175-pounder who squirts through defenders and is very hard to stop, and John Figueroa, a solid 200-pound power runner. Flanker Chuck Davidian is primarily a receiver. Speedster Monty Schultz is the team's third leading rusher and perhaps the most explosive of the Ram runners.

In average points per game the two teams are closely matched. The Rams have averaged 31.5 per contest through 10 games. Their high point production was 57 against Sacramento City College. E.C. sports an average of 33.6 points per game through 10 and scored 50 for a high against San Mateo.

Weightwise the two squads will be very close with Fresno averaging 193.9 on offense and 188.6 on defense. The Warriors average 194.8 pounds a man on offense and 186.5 on defense.

The one area in which El Camino has a definite edge on paper is team defense. The tough Warriors, paced by five defensive all-leaguers, have given up an average of only 12.6 points per game to 10 tough opponents.

Fresno's small, but agile, defensive unit has surrendered an average of 21.8 points per contest through 10 games. Led by all-Valley Conference stalwarts Jim Slaughter, Mike Russell, Ed Washington and Tom Roberts, the defensive unit, however, has shown a remarkable ability to be stingy when they have to be. Through the season they have contained state rushing leaders Don Harr (twice), Rocky Thompson, Pete Halfman, Lew Harris and Tim Garvin, when to do so meant to win the game.

El Camino comes into the game with the most impressive of credentials. They have the reputation, the depth, and the

assurance of many that they are the champions of the toughest junior college league in the country. They have defeated Bakersfield 12-7, a team that ground the Rams down 34-6 in the season opener.

Fresno has a few things going for it too: An explosiveness that has astounded local fans, an uncanny way of rising to the occasion against whatever odds, and an intangible called desire.

Soccer Games Slated

The quarter-finals of the Southland district for the U.S. National Open Soccer Cup playoffs will take place Sunday at Rancho La Cienega Stadium and at the Continental Field in Torrance. The eight survivors will meet for the right to advance to the semi-finals.

The Cup matches at Rancho Stadium will start at 12:30 p.m. with the favored Montebello Armenians meeting the all-Latin Santa Barbara Club. At 2:30 p.m. champion Croatia Club of the Greater Los Angeles League will face the powerful El Salto Club, champion of the rival California Soccer League of East Los Angeles.

At the Continental Field, the program will get under way at 11:30 a.m. with strong Hollywood Stars clashing with equally powerful Thistle Club, an all-British soccer team, which includes four former players of the L.A. Wolves. Los Angeles Soccer Club, twice winner of the coveted U.S. Open Trophy, will fare a surprisingly strong Valley German-American Club at 1:30 p.m.

The earlier kick-off time for the Continental Field has been ordered by Cup Commissioner Dio Cordero, because of no lighting facilities in case of overtime.

Rancho's main feature between the two league champions, Croatia and El Salto expects to be a tough and rough battle of champions. The all-Mexican squad, with their clever short passing game, could give the Croatians an unexpected surprise. Croatia's General Manager Frank Topol claims to have the goal scoring power and confidence to eliminate the upset minded El Salto. Overtime periods of two 15 minutes each, up to a maximum of one hour, will be played at all four games, if necessary, in order to determine the four winners.

Lakers Play On the Road

The Los Angeles Lakers have basketball games scheduled in Atlanta tonight and Chicago on Saturday.

The team, with Jerry West back in action after missing six games, will play in San Diego Sunday.

Chicago Bears Lead Division

For the third time in the past six weeks, the L.A. Rams face the first-place team in the National Football League's Central Division.

The Rams hosted Detroit on Nov. 3. At the time, the Lions were in first place in the crazy, mixed-up Central with a record of 3-3-1.

Last Sunday the Rams battled the Minnesota Vikings, who led the Central then with a 6-5 mark.

This Sunday it's the mighty Chicago Bears with a 6-6 record and a grip on first place.

Winners in both their 1968 meetings with Minnesota, the Bears need only to win their final two games (the Rams Sunday and the Packers the following Sunday) to become the Central Division champion.

The Rams' situation is identical to that of the Bears. If they can win their final two, they will repeat as champions of the Coastal Division.

Thus, the 44th championship meeting between Chicago and Los Angeles must be considered one of the most important in the long and hectic series between the two clubs.

Not since 1955 when the Rams won the Western Conference title with an 8-3-1 record and a half-game margin over the second-place Bears have both clubs been in title contention this late in the season.

Rams head coach George Allen, after three days of viewing the current Chicago edition on film, is convinced the Bears are the team to beat in the Central.

"The Bears look like the best running team in the NFL," the Rams' coach said at mid-week. "They came into this game with more ground yardage than any other team... They are the No. 1 team in that department."

"In my opinion, the Bears have more team speed than at any other time in the past 10 years. Not only do they have speed at the receiving positions in Dick Gordon and Cecil Turner, but they have fine backfield speed and, in Jack Concannon, one of the better runners from quarterback."

In last year's Rams-Bears game at Chicago, Concannon ran 11 times for a net of 77 yards and one touchdown. It was the highest total by any rusher, quarterback or running back, against the Rams in the 14 league games of 1967.

Since the injury to Gale Sayers, halfback Brian Piccolo and fullback Ronnie Bull have carried the Chicago running game and both have done well. Piccolo has a four-yards-carry average with 343 yards in 86 carries and Bull has averaged 4.37 with 332 yards in 76 trips. Piccolo also is the leading receiver on the club with 25 catches for 271 yards.